

**MANSFIELD DOWNTOWN PARTNERSHIP
BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND RETENTION COMMITTEE**

June 10, 2015

5:00 PM

**Mansfield Downtown Partnership Office
23 Royce Circle**

MINUTES

Present: Steve Rogers (Chair), Curt Hirsch, Ron Liu, Paul McCarthy, Rene Schein

Staff: Cynthia van Zelm

Guests: Logan Aldave, Manager of Froyoworld; Matt Joyce, Property Manager with The Wilder Companies

1. Call to Order

Chair Steve Rogers called the meeting to order at 5 pm.

2. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

3. Approval of Minutes from October 9, 2014, January 7, 2015, and March 12, 2015

Paul McCarthy made a motion to approve the October 9, 2014 minutes. Rene Schein seconded the motion. Curt Hirsch indicated that he thought he was at this meeting. The minutes will reflect that he was at the meeting. The minutes were approved with the change.

Steve Rogers made a motion to approve the January 7, 2015 minutes. Mr. McCarthy seconded the motion. The minutes were approved with two abstentions from Mr. Hirsch and Ms. Schein.

The March 12, 2015 minutes were not approved.

4. Update from Logan Aldave, Manager of Froyoworld

Mr. Rogers said the Committee's goal is to listen to Storrs Center businesses concerns and issues. Over the last few months, the Committee has hosted several businesses to learn about the positives and challenges that have faced the businesses in Storrs Center.

Mr. Aldave and Committee members introduced themselves.

Mr. Aldave said he started managing the Froyoworld in Storrs, in November.

He said his employees have concerns about where to park; they do not like to pay to park. It is also difficult to find places for the delivery car to park long term since many of the 15 minute and 30 minute spots are always taken.

Dennis Bok, the owner, asked that Mr. Aldave convey the need to the Committee to have places that are attractive to a younger crowd. More places to “hang out” are needed. It would also be great to have more activities in the summer.

Ron Liu said that he has had similar issues with parking for delivery cars and urged Mr. Aldave to work with LAZ Parking and the Town.

5. Update on Tenanting and Marketing in Storrs Center – Matt Joyce, Property Manager with The Wilder Companies

Matt Joyce joined the meeting.

Mr. Joyce said The Wilder Companies are now managing the retail property that is built. He passed out copies of the new Storrs Center directory of which he will be providing several copies to the businesses in Storrs Center.

He said that Hart Realty Advisers is the owner (for the CT Retirement Plans and Trust Funds) of the Storrs Center commercial property, and Wilder manages the property for Hart. Hart and EdR (the rental residential section of Storrs Center) jointly sit on a condo association that manages Storrs Center. If there are operational and maintenance issues, the condo association addresses those issues.

Mr. Rogers asked for the breakdown of the condo association. Mr. Joyce said EdR is represented at the 80 percent level while Hart is represented at 20 percent.

Rene Schein asked if Phase 2 (Wilbur Cross Way) was part of the 20 percent. Mr. Joyce indicated that it was still owned by Storrs Center Alliance. If it was sold, it would likely be under a separate condo association.

Ms. Schein expressed a concern for how Common Area Maintenance (CAM) charges are determined. She would like businesses to have more control over these expenses that they need to pay. Mr. Joyce said those charges are managed by the condo association. He monitors the expenses. When Hart took over, the team looked at ways to manage the finances even more efficiently. He worked with the condo association to look at a variety of vendors to evaluate their product and costs.

Mr. Joyce said there has yet to be a clear baseline as the property has not been open for that long. He said it is in everyone’s interest to keep costs low.

Ms. Schein asked if tenants would serve on the condo association. Mr. Joyce said he wants to have an open dialogue with the tenants.

Mr. Rogers asked Mr. Joyce what other properties he manages in the area. Mr. Joyce said he manages Somerset Square in Glastonbury, Milford Marketplace, among others. He is spending a lot of time in Storrs.

Mr. Joyce said the three spaces in the 5,000 square foot building adjacent to Price Chopper have been leased to Hair Cuttery, Wingstop, and The UPS Store. All three should open this summer.

He said Storrs Center is 100 percent leased.

Mr. Liu expressed concern about spaces in Phase 2 being leased that may compete with businesses already open in Storrs Center. Mr. Joyce said that while Wilder has no hand in the leasing of Phase 2, he believes that Storrs Center Alliance is mindful of the tenant base. He can pass on these concerns to Storrs Center Alliance.

Ms. Schein expressed her concern about the taxes for this year. Mr. Joyce said Wilder and Hart are advocating for the entire tenant base in Storrs Center.

Mr. Joyce said Wilder will continue to host monthly marketing meetings. Wilder is maintaining Storrs Center Alliance's budget. Wilder is also working with the Partnership to market Storrs Center through, among others, UConn Orientation, and the UConn Alumni Association Storrs Center Stroll.

He said Wilder had done a survey of the type of marketing that the tenants desired and there was an interest in radio ads. They have done a revolving roll out of ads to brand Storrs Center. The audience is the local community and UConn.

Mr. Liu asked about signage to point people to the businesses on Royce Circle. Mr. Joyce wondered if another kiosk would work near the UConn Health Center.

Ms. van Zelm said she would talk to the Town Dept. of Public Works about a directional sign that could go at the intersection of Royce Circle and Bolton Road Extension underneath the parking directional sign.

Mr. Hirsch said there were also issues with skateboarders on Dog Lane sidewalks disrupting the businesses, and its customers. Ms. van Zelm said she is waiting for the Town Attorney to review the set of ordinances that would prohibit this practice. Mr. Joyce thought a physical barrier could be put down to deter the skateboarders.

Mr. Rogers thanked Mr. Joyce and Mr. Aldave for attending.

6. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 6:15 pm.

Minutes taken by Cynthia van Zelm.